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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/540,391 03/31/00 ROBINS

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EXAMINER

TM02/0813

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ATTN PATENT GROUP
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REASON, J ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2163
DATE MAILED:

08/13/01

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/540,391

Applicant(s)

ROBINS, MARK

Examiner

James A. Reagan

Art Unit

2163

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to the application filed on March 31, 2000.
2. Claims 1-14 have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

3. Claims 1-3 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Mora et al. et al. U.S. Patent Number 6,161,113.

Claim 1:

(a) Column 19, lines 46-47. Documenting the features in the product is correspondent to enumerating the features of a product.

(b) Figures 3-8. Figure 3 specifically shows enumerating the tasks, milestones, approvals, and other steps involved with a project lifecycle.

Claim 2:

Column 3, lines 30-51. Storing forms and documents associated with a project plan.

Claim 3:

Abstract. "A database (11b) stores forms for documents." User documents associated with the project plan are saved on a database.

Claim 8:

(a) Column 19, lines 46-47. Documenting the features in the product is correspondent to enumerating the features of a product.

(b) Figures 3-8. Figure 3 specifically shows enumerating the tasks, milestones, approvals, and other steps involved with a project lifecycle.

Claim 9:

Column 3, lines 30-51. Storing forms and documents associated with a project plan.

Claim 10:

Abstract. "A database (11b) stores forms for documents." User documents associated with the project plan are saved on a database.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 4-7 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mora et al. in view of Kroenke.

Claim 4:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 3. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose a relational database. Kronenke, however on pages 17 and 18 does teach the definition of a relational database. A relational database uses associations between entities and classes to illustrate links and connections. Data is stored in a relational model that minimizes duplicate data and eliminates certain types of processing errors that can be associated with the non-relational model. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to utilize the structure of a relational database. By using a relationship model, the occurrences of missing or duplicate data is dramatically reduced, which gives rise to a database that is more efficient and accurate.

Claim 5:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 1 and 2. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose assigning a unique key to every task. Kronenke, however, on page 116 does teach the definition of a key used in a relational database application. A key is a group of one or more attributes in a record that uniquely define that record or relation, such as a task number or identification. A primary key is an attribute selected to be the key of a relation. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have a key in every record of every table of the database. Since a key uniquely identifies each record, keys can be used to link

rows and records between tables. Instances of those relationships can then be queried and mined. This allows an effective means of retrieving instances of data associated with a particular situation, such as a specific task, milestone, completion, or approval during a specific time period of a project plan. This assists a project manager with retrieving data more proficiently.

Claim 6:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 5. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose generating views of the features and linked tasks. Kronenke, however on pages 533, 534 and throughout chapter three describes and shows the use of the entity relationship diagram. The diagram shows entities are something that the user wants to track (Kroenke, pg 49). Entities are associated or linked with one another by the use of relationships (Kroenke, pg 51). Entity relationship diagrams can be displayed within the relational database. One example of an entity would be a task or milestone during a project lifecycle. Relationships between tasks or milestones may be shown and displayed by the use of an entity relationship diagram. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to generate views of the features and linked tasks, such as in the entity relationship diagram, because by defining the featured tasks as an entity the relationship between entities can be shown. This provides a better understanding of the project, and its constituent and related elements are

realized. This will aid the project manager in making decisions that affect the project both microscopically and macroscopically.

Claim 7:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 1, 2, 5 and 6. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose generating views of the feature entries and linked tasks by filtering on the feature key and links to tasks. Kronenke, however on pages 36-38, does describe the use of the query as a database tool designed to efficiently filter records in a database. Queries can search large databases by using a single attribute or a plurality of attributes. Queries can be accomplished by filtering on primary and secondary keys within the list of records. The user can define the scope of the filtering query to return only the records that contain relevant attributes in view of the query. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use a filter or query to identify unique records by their keys or other unique elements. By applying a tool that can filter through the information of a database and retrieve only select instances, a project member can answer questions or identify problems associated with a project during its life cycle more quickly and easily.

Claim 11:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 8, 9, and 10. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose a relational database. Kronenke, however on pages 17 and 18 does teach the definition of a relational

database. A relational database uses associations between entities and classes to illustrate links and connections. Data is stored in a relational model that minimizes duplicate data and eliminates certain types of processing errors that can be associated with the non-relational model. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to utilize the structure of a relational database. By using a relationship model, the occurrences of missing or duplicate data id dramatically reduced, which gives rise to a database that is more efficient and accurate.

Claim 12:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 8 and 9. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose assigning a unique key to every task. Kronenke, however, on page 116 does teach the definition of a key used in a relational database application. A key is a group of one or more attributes in a record that uniquely define that record or relation, such as a task number or identification. A primary key is an attribute selected to be the key of a relation. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have a key in every record of every table of the database. Since a key uniquely identifies each record, keys can be used to link rows and records between tables. Instances of those relationships can then be queried and mined. This allows an effective means of retrieving instances of data associated with a particular situation, such as a specific task, milestone,

completion, or approval during a specific time period of a project plan. This assists a project manager with retrieving data more proficiently.

Claim 13:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 8, 9, and 12. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose generating views of the features and linked tasks. Kronenke, however on pages 533, 534 and throughout chapter three describes and shows the use of the entity relationship diagram. The diagram shows entities are something that the user wants to track (Kronenke, pg 49). Entities are associated or linked with one another by the use of relationships (Kronenke, pg 51). Entity relationship diagrams can be displayed within the relational database. One example of an entity would be a task or milestone during a project lifecycle. Relationships between tasks or milestones may be shown and displayed by the use of an entity relationship diagram. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to generate views of the features and linked tasks, such as in the entity relationship diagram, because by defining the featured tasks as an entity the relationship between entities can be shown. This provides a better understanding of the project, and its constituent and related elements are realized. This will aid the project manager in making decisions that affect the project both microscopically and macroscopically.

Claim 14:

Mora et al. discloses the methods discussed above in the rejection of claims 8, 9, 12, and 13. Mora et al. does not explicitly disclose generating views of the feature entries and linked tasks by filtering on the feature key and links to tasks. Kronenke, however on pages 36-38, does describe the use of the query as a database tool designed to efficiently filter records in a database. Queries can search large databases by using a single attribute or a plurality of attributes. Queries can be accomplished by filtering on primary and secondary keys within the list of records. The user can define the scope of the filtering query to return only the records that contain relevant attributes in view of the query. It would have been an obvious advantage to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use a filter or query to identify unique records by their keys or other unique elements. By applying a tool that can filter through the information of a database and retrieve only select instances, a project member can answer questions or identify problems associated with a project during its life cycle more quickly and easily.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Reagan whose telephone number is 703.306.9131. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00a - 5:00p M-F.
- If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 703.305.9643. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.308.1396 for regular communications and 703.308.1396 for After Final communications.
- Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.305.3900.

James A. Reagan
Examiner
Art Unit 2163

JAR
August 8, 2001



TARIQ R. HAFIZ
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